

It's War: The Real Meat Grinder Starts Now, by Pepe Escobar

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No more shadow play. It's now in the open. No holds barred.

Exhibit 1: Friday, March 22, 2024. It's War. The Kremlin, via Peskov, finally admits it, on the record.

The money quote:

"Russia cannot allow the existence on its borders of a state that has a documented intention to use any methods to take Crimea away from it, not to mention the territory of new regions."

Translation: the Hegemon-constructed Kiev mongrel is doomed, one way or another.

The Kremlin signal: "We haven't even started" starts now.

Exhibit 2: Friday afternoon, a few hours after Peskov. Confirmed by a serious European – not Russian – source. The first counter-signal.

Regular troops from France, Germany and Poland have arrived, by rail and air, to Cherkassy, south of Kiev. A substantial force. No numbers leaked. They are being housed in schools. For all practical purposes, this is a NATO force.

That signals, "Let the games begin". From a Russian point of view, Mr. Khinzal's business cards are set to be in great demand.

Exhibit 3: Friday evening. Terror attack on Crocus City, a music venue northwest of Moscow. A heavily trained commando shoots people on sight, point blank, in cold blood, then sets a concert hall on fire. The definitive counter-signal: with the battlefield collapsing, all that's left is terrorism in Moscow.

And just as terror was striking Moscow, the US and the UK, in southwest Asia, was bombing Sana'a, the Yemeni capital, with at least five strikes.

Some nifty coordination. Yemen has just clinched a strategic deal in Oman with Russia-China for no-hassle navigation in the Red Sea, and is among the top candidates for BRICS+ expansion at the summit in Kazan next October.

Not only the Houthis are spectacularly defeating thalassocracy, they have the Russia-China strategic partnership on their side. Assuring China and Russia that their ships can sail through the Bab-al-Mandeb, Red Sea and Gulf of Aden with no problems is exchanged with total political support from Beijing and Moscow.

The sponsors remain the same

Deep in the night in Moscow, before dawn on Saturday 23. Virtually no one is sleeping. Rumors dance like dervishes on countless screens. Of course nothing has been confirmed – yet. Only the FSB will have answers. A massive investigation is in

progress.

The timing of the Crocus massacre is quite intriguing. On a Friday during Ramadan. Real Muslims would not even think about perpetrating a mass murder of unarmed civilians under such a holy occasion. Compare it with the ISIS card being frantically branded by the usual suspects.

Let's go pop. To quote Talking Heads: "This ain't no party/ this ain't no disco/ this ain't no fooling around". Oh no; it's more like an all-American psy op. ISIS are cartoonish mercenaries/goons. Not real Muslims. And everyone knows who finances and weaponizes them.

That leads to the most possible scenario, before the FSB weighs in: ISIS goons imported from the Syria battleground – as it stands, probably Tajiks – trained by CIA and MI6, working on behalf of the Ukrainian SBU. Several witnesses at Crocus referred to "Wahhabis" – as in the commando killers did not look like Slavs.

It was up to Serbia's Aleksandar Vucic to cut to the chase. He directly connected the "warnings" in early March from American and British embassies directed at their citizens not to visit public places in Moscow with CIA/MI6 intel having inside info about possible terrorism, and not disclosing it to Moscow.

The plot thickens when it is established that Crocus is owned by the Agalarovs: an Azeri-Russian billionaire family, very close friends of...

... Donald Trump.

Talk about a Deep State-pinpointed target.

ISIS spin-off or banderistas – the sponsors remain the same. The clownish secretary of the National Security and Defense Council of Ukraine, Oleksiy Danilov, was dumb enough to virtually, indirectly confirm they did it, saying on Ukrainian TV, "we will give them [Russians] this kind of fun more often."

But it was up to Sergei Goncharov, a veteran of the elite Russia Alpha anti-terrorism unit, to get closer to unwrapping the enigma: he told Sputnik the most feasible mastermind is Kyrylo Budanov – the chief of the Main Directorate of Intelligence at the Ukrainian Ministry of Defense.

The "spy chief" who happens to be the top CIA asset in Kiev.

It's got to go till the last Ukrainian

The three exhibits above complement what the head of NATO's military committee, Rob Bauer, previously told a security forum in Kiev: "You need more than just grenades – you need people to replace the dead and wounded. And this means mobilization."

Translation: NATO spelling out this is a war until the last Ukrainian.

And the "leadership" in Kiev still does not get it. Former Minister of Infrastructure Omelyan: "If we win, we will pay back with Russian oil, gas, diamonds and fur. If we lose, there will be no talk of money – the West will think about how to survive."